

---

CONNECTICUT  
EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE;  
AND  
RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER.

---

VOL. VIII.

SEPTEMBER, 1815.

No. 9.

---

*General Reflections and Remarks, arising from the foregoing Essays on the Genuineness and Authenticity of the Historical Books of the Old Testament.*

**I**N a series of Essays, which have been published in several preceding Numbers of the Magazine, we have taken a view of all the historical books of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, from Genesis to the book of Esther. As the sacred Volume opens with a declaration of the being and unity of God, in that passage of inimitable beauty, "In the beginning,—GOD—created the heaven and the earth," we first endeavoured to produce some of the evidence derived from history in confirmation of this great truth. By an attention to this subject, we found that the worship of idols and false gods could be traced to its commencement; that its beginning was since the earliest times of men; and that it arose principally from an improper veneration of great men, from the deification of heroes and patriots after their decease. This fact leads to the irresistible conclusion that prior to

this time, when men had the best opportunity to know their Creator, they worshipped the one only true God.—After this view of the origin of Idolatry, we considered the evidence of the genuineness of the books of the Pentateuch, and then, by an examination of those sacred books separately, we found the most satisfactory evidence of their authenticity and inspiration. They were written by Moses, the first and most interesting of all writers, and greatest of prophets, his narration is true, and was written under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In a careful and concise examination of the other historical books of the Old Testament, we have found the most satisfactory and conclusive evidence of their authenticity and divine authority. We have thus found, so far as we have gone, the propriety of the holy declaration of the apostle, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." In the examination of the respective books, a sketch of the principal matters contained in them has been given.

And now, having, by divine favour, completed my design, if

these efforts may have been the means of resolving the doubts, of confirming the faith, of animating the hope, of any of my readers ; if they may have been the occasion of increasing our attachment to the sacred word ; if they have afforded to any of us an additional inducement to search the scriptures, to study and love the divine law ; if we have discovered any new motives to adore and exalt the grace of God in giving to men the holy revelation of his will ; the labor which has been devoted to the subject, has not been devoted in vain. If the truth of God has, by divine assistance, been presented in a proper light ; if his holy word has been exhibited, in any degree, according to its true character, and if we have made no wise improvement of the privilege ; then have we an additional reason to fear and tremble at the prospect of shortly appearing at the bar of God. " Oh, for that warning voice, which he who saw the apocalypse, heard cry in heaven aloud," Oh, for a sweet whisper to our hearts from the glorious spirit of holiness, to break our lethargy, to awaken our souls to the interests of eternity, to point our thoughts, to lead our feet to God ! The Lord grant that our case may not be like those who are judicially blinded, because of obstinate unbelief. " But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart." But the apostle adds, for our encouragement and joy, " Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away." If we have long read Moses and the prophets without discovering their divine excellency, our hearts should now turn to the Lord, that we may see

their beauty and admire their glory. It is the blindness of the heart, and that alone, that keeps the glories of a divine Saviour beyond our view. From the friends of Jesus, shortly, the veil will all be removed, they shall behold the splendor of his presence, and rejoice for ever in his likeness.

We shall now proceed to some general remarks, from the cursory view which has been taken of the historical books of the scriptures of the Old Testament.

1. The providence of God is very signally manifest in the preservation of the holy scriptures. In the frequent revolutions of human affairs, and amid the general wreck of ancient nations, the greater part of the writings of antiquity have become irrecoverably lost. Many causes have conspired to the production of this calamitous event. After the fall of the Roman Empire, and the rise of Mahometanism, about six hundred years after Christ, the civilized world was universally overrun by barbarous nations, which was succeeded by a gloomy period of ignorance, vice, and imposture, which continued several centuries. These conquerors, generally, possessed an inveterate hostility to learning, arts, and civilization, of almost every kind. And it was their unremitting endeavour to destroy all the vestiges of ancient literature, religion, and laws. In their destructive conquests, cities were burnt, public edifices were demolished, libraries were destroyed, and the fairest countries of Asia, Europe, and Africa, were made a scene of desolation. Few cities existed which were not repeatedly sacked, plundered, and burnt.

The art of printing is of modern invention. This great im-

provement in the arts of literature was made but a little before the discovery of America. Previous to that time, there were no books but such as were written out by hand, at great labor and expense. Of course, they must be scarce, owned by the rich only, and few copies of any one could be supposed to exist.

One consideration further, on the subject before us, is important to be noticed. The holy scriptures have ever been unpopular among men. They always taught unwelcome truths. They inculcate truths and duties which are opposed to the natural propensities of the human heart. They are designed to exalt God, to humble the pride of man, to teach his dependent and ruined state, and his imminent danger of everlasting evil. They teach that the idols of the heathen are vanity and a lie, that the revered systems of pagan religion, upheld by the pride of philosophy and the strength of power, with their millions of ardent votaries, were falsehood and folly, and that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." Under these circumstances, it could not have been otherwise than what has actually taken place. The Bible, with all its heaven-born truths, has been hated and reviled, and the disciples of the religion of the scriptures have been subjected to every suffering and reproach. In all antiquity, no nation was the subject of such general hatred as the Jews. The true reason of which was, they claimed to possess the religion of the true God, and they denounced every other as imposture. The

bitter and universal odium of other nations towards this people appears in many tracts of ancient authors yet extant. Many of the most liberal historians, when they come to speak of the Jews, seem to lose all temper. Not less was the odium universally cast upon the early Christians. As the master of the house was called Beelzebub, so, eminently, were they of his household. The humble followers of the Prince of life, bearing the holy scriptures in their hands, and their truths in their hearts, were reviled as the abettors of every enormity, as the perpetrators of every crime. This enmity of wickedness and idolatry was too great to be long confined to mere reproaches. It soon broke out in flames of the most unrelenting persecution. A little experience convinced the sons of paganism, that destroying the lives of the followers of Jesus would not effect their object. As the sacred scriptures were their guide and their hope, their faith would live while the Bible could be enjoyed. Of course, the powers of wickedness resolved on its destruction. Every copy which could be found was committed to the flames.—Under all these difficulties and dangers, this holy book still lives. Through all the catastrophes of nations, through all the dispersions of the people of God, through all the desolations of war, amid all the rage of persecution, and all the malice of covert enemies, this heavenly volume has rode securely down the tract of ages, unshaken by every tempest, uninjured by every storm. The friends of this sacred book have been few and weak, its enemies have been numerous and strong, yet it is pre-



served. This can hardly be considered less than a standing miracle ; it is, at least, a most illustrious display of God's providential care for the protection of his truth. And it is, of itself, an argument, sufficient to abash all the subtleties of infidelity, that the inspired volume has ever been the peculiar care of God.

2. Through the merciful favor of God, the holy scriptures have been transmitted to us in their original purity. We have the most satisfactory evidence, that we now have the sacred oracles, substantially, just as they came from the hands of the venerable prophets and apostles of God, "who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Through all the period of the Jewish state, the scriptures of the Old Testament were most carefully guarded by the inspired prophets, by the different tribes of Israel, by Jews and Samaritans, by the various religious sects among the Jews, all watching against any corruptions; that no alterations of the sacred text could be permitted to take place. Since the time of Christ, Jews and Christians have been mutual guards upon each other, the various religious sects, which infinite wisdom has suffered to arise in the Christian world, have been equally watchful for the integrity of the inspired volume ; and have secured it against all possibility of corruption. Before the completion of the Old Testament, the Jews began to be dispersed, and soon after, were dispersed among all nations. Wherever they went, they carried their holy law, and, from one end of the world to the other, they still exist, and still preserve the sacred

oracles of God which were committed to their fathers. Immediately after the planting of Christianity, the divine seed sprang up and grew abundantly, the branches of the tree spread abroad and overshadowed the nations. In consequence of the special injunction of Christ, "Go, teach all nations," and, in consequence of the great persecutions which the unbelief of Judea and the sword of Rome raised against his followers, they soon became widely dispersed ; the baptismal font was opened upon the banks of the Indus and the Ister ; the plains of Numidia and the forests of Britain re-echoed the songs of redeeming mercy. Wherever the disciples of Jesus travelled, they bore in their bosoms the sacred book of God, and, at the peril of their blood, guarded its divine pages from every unhallowed touch. Such being the situation and condition of Christians, it will be readily perceived, that, as the enemies of divine truth could never effect a general corruption of the sacred scriptures, so neither could there ever be a combination of its professed friends for the accomplishment of the same object.

But however conclusive our deductions upon this subject may be, we are not under the necessity of relying upon them, being favored, through the good hand of God, with the most satisfactory proofs of the integrity of the holy scriptures. About 260 years before Christ, Ptolemy Philadelphus king of Egypt, desirous to erect a valuable library at Alexandria, procured a copy of the sacred books of the Old Testament from Jerusalem, and employed a number of men of great learning to translate them from the Hebrew



tongue into the Greek. That translation was used by Christ and his Apostles, and it is still preserved. This version agrees, in all essential particulars, with the present Hebrew text. In the Syriack language, there is still extant a very ancient version of the Old and New Testament, which agrees with the scriptures as we now have them. There is also a very ancient version of the five books of Moses in the Samaritan dialect, which forcibly corroborates the sacred text in the present Hebrew Bibles.

In many of the libraries of Europe, there are now existing numerous ancient manuscripts of the holy scriptures, some of them of the age of many centuries, which establish the validity of the scriptures in their present form. In all the early fathers of the Christian church, for three or four centuries after Christ, many of whose works have come down to us, there are large quotations from the scriptures, which show that the sacred books, used by them, were the same sacred volume which is now in our hands.—We may add further. If God in his good providence would take such peculiar care to preserve the volume of the holy scriptures, for the benefit of his people in every age, as we have seen to be the case, we may rest assured that he would cause it to be kept from any essential corruption. His church on earth is always the same, and must ever have the same scriptures of truth.

One other consideration may properly be noticed in this place. As we are obliged to read the scriptures by a translation in our own language, it becomes an important enquiry, Is the translation of the holy scriptures now in use

among us, a correct translation? This question, at all times important, has become more so of late, in consequence of its having been a subject of considerable discussion, and in consequence of some recent attempts to offer to the public new translations of some parts of the sacred volume.—The Old Testament was written originally, in Hebrew, the New Testament, in Greek. They were translated into Latin, in or near the days of the apostles. The first translation of any part of the scriptures into the English language, was a translation of the New Testament by the celebrated John Wickliffe, about the year of our Lord 1380. William Tyndall published a translation of the New Testament, in 1526. He afterwards added a translation of several of the books of the Old Testament. In 1535, the whole Bible was printed in our language, for the first time, translated by Miles Coverdale and several others, with the approbation of King Henry VIII. Another translation was published soon after, partly the work of the celebrated martyr John Rogers. In the reign of Queen Mary, the illustrious exiles, who fled from her persecution to Geneva, published a new translation of the whole Bible. In the succeeding reign of Elizabeth, fourteen of the most eminent divines in the English church were ordered to make another translation of the scriptures. This was done, and the volume was printed in 1563. That translation is commonly denominated The Bishop's Bible. A few years later, some of the Roman Catholics in England published a translation of the New Testament. In the beginning of the reign of

James I, the Puritans, finding themselves aggrieved with some things existing in the established church, desired leave to present the king a petition for redress. This was granted. One thing requested by them was that there might be a new translation of the Bible. As there appear to have been no objections to this measure, it was immediately adopted by the king. By his command, fifty-four of the most learned scholars and divines of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, were designated to the performance of this great work. Some of them dying soon after their appointment, the work was executed by forty-seven. They were directed to make an exact translation from the original tongues; to compare carefully with the translations then existing; and to examine all the modern translations of the French, Dutch, German, and other languages. The translators arranged themselves in six companies. Each of these had their respective portion of the sacred books. When they had completed their work, the part of each class was examined by all the others. And no passage passed till it was approved by the whole. The work employed five years. It was begun in 1606, and finished in 1611. After it was completed, it was revised by other persons of the greatest learning and piety, and published with the dedication to the king, now contained in our Bibles.—Excepting some partial and limited translations since that time, these are all the translations of the scriptures that have been made in our language. It is hard to conceive of any method in which a translation could be more satisfactorily

executed, than the one in which our present one was made. It may also be added, that all learned and pious men, who have examined this translation for two hundred years, have pronounced it an accurate and faithful translation. This was the opinion of the late President Stiles, than whom, perhaps, there has never been a more competent judge in this state. It is, undoubtedly, one of the best translations to be found in any modern language. This English translation is now read by more people than any other version of the scriptures existing. It ought to be a grateful reflection with us that it was performed at the request of the venerable Puritans, who, a few years after, commenced the settlement of New England. This great work was the result of the exertions and prayers of those consecrated souls, whose devoted feet left the foot-steps of their fathers to traverse these unhallowed fields.

3. The sacred history contained in the holy scriptures is all that is necessary for the church of God. It was never the design of the Holy Spirit to gratify the scholar with the particular history of nations. The sole object is to give a concise view of the people of God through the lapse of ages, and occasional sketches of the history of other people, sufficient to illustrate the general character of divine providence. Here we may notice the peculiar wisdom of the most High, in bringing down the scripture history to the time when pagan history begins to be authentic. There is nothing certain among profane historians, earlier than about the time of the Babylonish captivity.—From that period, the Greek and

Latin histories are authentic, and we can learn the great events of the providence of God from those sources. It is remarkable that Herodotus, who is called by literary writers the father of history, was cotemporary with Ezra, and Nehemiah, and the prophet Malachi. Thucydides and Xenophon soon followed, and every age since has produced historians. Thus we have, in the historical books of scripture, a plain and correct account of creation, of the origin and progress of nations, of the origin and advancement of the arts of life, and a connected history of mankind, particularly of the people of God, down to the time of Nehemiah, a period of 3550 years. From that time to the present, infinite wisdom has taken care that the great events of divine providence among men should be recorded and transmitted to succeeding times by thousands of authors.—A particular history, under the guidance of the Spirit of truth, of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, of his apostles, and the first planting of Christianity, was needful to the church of God; and this is supplied in the gospels, and the book of the acts of the apostles. The remainder of the history of the Christian church is left to uninspired pens. Oh, the wisdom and goodness of the holy King of Zion!

4. In view of this extensive subject, we perceive what ever ought to be the great object in all reading of history. It is to behold the character of God, and learn the ways of his providence. The least attention to the historical books of the scriptures will convince any one that the great object of the inspired writers is

to bring into view the true character of God, as illustrated in the works of his providence; particularly, in his various dealings with his visible people. Here we see his goodness, his wisdom, his power, and his justice. Here we behold the performance of his promises, the execution of his threatenings, his long suffering forbearance, and his infinite grace. In all true history the attentive reader will discover the same great truths, which are primarily brought into view by the inspired writers. The same character of man, and the same character of God, the same character of the wicked, and the same character of the righteous, are to be found in the history of all nations of men. In the convulsions of empires, in the strifes of ambition, in the desolations of war, in the intrigues of senates, in the sufferings of the oppressed, in the vast variety of individual character, the pious observer will discover the overruling hand of infinite wisdom and goodness, regulating and restraining the whole. He will see all events rendered subservient to the interests of the church of God; he will behold the ancient prophecies of his word constantly elucidated by the occurrence of predicted events; he will see things in a general preparation for the accomplishment of all his revealed purposes which are yet unperformed. The attentive reader of history, both sacred and profane, will perceive that innocence and virtue are always safe in the hands of the holy Governor of the world, that though wickedness may prosper for a season, in the end, it shall surely be overthrown. He will see the vanity of all human glory, the emptiness of ambition, the deceitfulness



of wealth, the delusions of popular fame, the unsatisfactory nature of power, the shortness of life, and the unceasing disappointment of human hope. He will see the miseries of this world, all the effect of the lusts and passions of men, and that the only reasonable prospect for an immortal being is in the holy unchanging kingdom of the Redeemer.

5. Our subject calls us to remember, with humble gratitude, the great things which God has done for us. "What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." The most High distinguished the people of his ancient covenant with great mercies. The greatest of which was that he gave them the holy scriptures. All this has he done for us. While he has suffered the deluded sons of Mahomet to be groping for ages in the vagaries of the Alcoran, while the miserable votaries of paganism have been trembling before their idol divinities, and polluting their souls with every rite of profaneness and corruption, we have the sacred word of truth, which "the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."—"Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Yet is all this mystery, the mystery of God manifest in the flesh, with the great end for which it was done, and the great objects which will be accomplished by it, clearly made known to us in the holy scriptures of truth. Small indeed, comparatively, is

the number of our fellow-men, who enjoy this heavenly treasure, but, through the mercy of God, and through the prayers of our fathers, to us the five talents are committed.

What have we done for God, while he has done every thing for us? How do we improve this inestimable treasure which he has deposited in our hands? Is it our bosom companion, our teacher by day, our meditation by night; or is it suffered to lie neglected, while interest and pleasure occupy all our thoughts? Those who neglect their Bibles leave the fields of heaven to gather food on the bleak marshes of frozen philosophy.—How shall we spend life with propriety? The essayists can partly inform us. How shall we spend eternity in glory? The word of God, alone, can tell.—What are we, what are our hopes, our prospects? Ask the learned sons of philosophy. Ask the followers of eastern superstition. A few probabilities, a few idle dreams, are all that they can give. Ask the word of God. The veil is now removed, the mists are cleared away, the Sun of righteousness arises in his splendor, it is all unclouded day.—Open the sacred pages, the hill of Zion rises to view, inviting the longing pilgrim to ascend and rest, and rest forever in the embraces of his God. Are you in sorrow? The word of God contains inexhaustible consolation. Are you in darkness? Go to that holy light which lightens the path of the just more and more, unto the perfect day. Are you longing for the enlargement of Zion, waiting and pleading for the consolations of Israel? Go to the unchanging promises of God, given in his word, give thanks, re-

joice, and hope. Are you perplexed with the mysteries of his providence? At the same source, learn the perfection of divine wisdom, learn to be still and adore.

6. How sure are the interests of Zion. In looking over the historical books of scripture, we see Jehovah taking the little flock of his people, defending them from enemies, and rescuing them from innumerable dangers. 'There we see the Lord Jesus performing what is declared of him by the prophet, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom." Thus did he take the little band, wandering, hopeless, through Eden's solitary way, with no hope but the mournful promise of the garden, and point their faith to the promised seed, and their souls to immortality. When Abel offered his acceptable sacrifice, and sealed it with his blood, the sinking parents were upheld by the promises of grace. When all flesh had corrupted themselves, and the church were compelled to fly, Jehovah provided the ark, and housed the little band in the presence of their Saviour. When idolatry again overspread the world, he called his servant from Chaldea, and promised to be his God and the God of his seed for ever. Them he has never forgotten. He delivered them from the oppressions of Egypt, carried them through the wilderness, saved them from the devices of all their enemies, rescued them from the strong arm of Assyrian power, and kept them in safety, till the desire of all nations came to his temple, and laid the foundation of Zion on a rock that can never be shaken. In the darkest times, he raised up prophets

and witnesses to stand for God, to testify his truth, and proclaim his love. Zion's God is still on the throne. His most glorious promises are yet unaccomplished. His truth has assured us that all ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God.—Look down the vista of futurity, see the sinking church arise, its enemies are confounded, it emerges from the darkness of ages, the Sun of Righteousness arises in his glory, the countless sons of faith and hope from the distant corners of the earth throng her temple gate, the songs of redeeming grace are wafted on every breeze;—Oh, let me die in the Lord, and for ever enjoy the visions of his glory.

7. The holy scriptures of truth will, one day, overspread the earth. From the days of Moses to the present time, the sacred volume has been, to a great part of mankind, a hallowed casket, unknown and unenjoyed. This cannot always be the case. The kingdom of Christ must fill the world, and the inspired volume is always the harbinger of the erection of this kingdom. The prophet Daniel, revealing the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, says, "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet,—and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." John saw an "angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." These promises are sure; and we are permitted to see them rapidly accomplishing. This day the holy scriptures are traversing the earth, and opening heavenly truth upon

eyes which never before saw the light of the Redeemer.—Are we interested in the work of the divine Saviour? Do our souls swell at the prospects of his glory? Lord Jesus, fulfil thy purposes. Send thy gospel through the earth. Let the great family of Adam behold thy grace. Let heaven and earth unite in the praises of redeeming love.



ON THE INEFFECTUACY OF DEATH-BED  
RETRACTIONS AND WARNINGS.

**I**T is a fact, which, if not of such frequent recurrence, would be not less wonderful, than melancholy, that mankind so generally fail to derive substantial benefit from the lessons, which the experience of others supplies. They see their fellow men rushing into errors, burdening themselves with guilt and remorse, and involving themselves in woe and ruin, and still they madly press forward, in the same devious and fatal path. Instead of being intimidated and rendered wise and circumspect, by the poignant sufferings and the terrible catastrophes of others, they act as if incurably bent on determining by desperate experiment, whether those causes, which have brought upon others only anguish and perdition, may not be harmless to them, or even ensure to them safety, peace and joy.

The effects upon his countrymen, which followed from the conversion of St. Paul, were such, as are clearly at war with every dictate of reason, and such, as must have balked all calculation, not made under a full conviction and a strong sense of the extreme obliquity of the human heart, and of the almost untameable obstina-

cy of prejudice and passion. This astonishing event never led them to suspect, that the Christian religion might be of heavenly original; it never induced them to scrutinize its evidences and character, in the spirit of meekness and impartiality; and it had no tendency to prepare them to acknowledge the Saviour's mission, to welcome his instructions, and to bow to his authority. Yet to any mind, judging independently of all reference to the wayward spirit, which actuates mankind and so often governs their decisions, such consequences must appear to have been almost inevitable. A singular phenomenon exists, and a solution of it is demanded. What solution can be discovered, which shall not invalidate the opinion of the Jews, and establish the truth of Christianity, on an immoveable basis? The most zealous votary and the most resolute and hardy champion of the Jewish religion, the most bitter foe, and the most daring and active opposer of the gospel of Christ, and the man of blameless morals and of unimpeached and unsuspected sincerity, in his attachments, abandons at once the cause, which he had warmly and laboriously supported, for that which he had virulently abhorred, and fiercely and cruelly resisted. He forsakes those, whom he had fondly loved, and unites with those whom he had regarded with rancorous hatred. He quits a nation, and joins a party, insignificant in its numbers. He leaves the great, the honorable, the opulent and the mighty, and associates himself with the despised, the poor, the odious and the defenceless. He renounces prospects, singularly fair, of honor and



distinction, of wealth and power, of ease and pleasure, and subjects himself to penury and contempt, to hardship and persecution, to peril and suffering. It is apparent, that to this course he must have been urged by motives, the most imperious. No considerations, but such as could not be withstood, could have been sufficient to extort such sacrifices, and to impel him to dare so many and so formidable evils. Not a single inducement calculated to operate upon a corrupt mind; not the faintest encouragement, suited to allure a time-serving spirit, could have lain before him. When the Jew came to enquire, what, then, could have prompted him to resign all, that the heart most fondly cherishes, and to brave all, that the mind of man most reluctantly incurs and most painfully supports, he would have discovered, that nothing, short of supposing him under the influence of the wildest lunacy, could furnish a solution of his conduct, if the account, he gave of the reasons, which governed him, should be rejected as fabulous. Pursuing the subject further, the inference would not be a remote nor a dubious one, that, if what he affirms, actually occurred, Christianity is a religion, which justly claims God as its author, and that it is at the hazard of the soul, that it is hated and scorned. Who, therefore, would not imagine it a rational expectation, that an occurrence, so extraordinary, and if Christianity be untrue, so inexplicable, as the conversion of the Apostle, must have shaken the unbelief of the Jews, have subdued their prejudices and prepared them to admit, without hesitation, the claims of Christ to be the long

anticipated Messiah? But such an expectation poorly accords with the sacred history. The marvellous change, in the character and conduct of St. Paul, had no salutary operation upon his countrymen. Instead of diminishing their hatred and inclining them to embrace Christianity, it only inflamed them with fiend-like malignity towards himself, and instigated them to a nefarious confederacy to imbrue their hands in his blood,

The nature of man is not changed. The elapse of ages has not meliorated his character. He is the same depraved being now, that he appeared eighteen centuries ago. With the same stubborn pertinacity does he hold fast error, with the same determined perseverance does he pursue the wayward path, which he has taken, and with the same hardy contempt, or senseless indifference does he regard the various and solemn warnings, which either the conduct, the loud remonstrances and affecting entreaties, or the appalling wretchedness of those, around him, may afford.

It is at times the fact, that the staunchest of infidels abandons his principles of unbelief, and with deep contrition traces his way back to Christianity; that the dupe of the licentious opinion, that all shall find salvation, that God has no wrath in store for the sinner, and that he who serveth him, and he who serveth him not, shall fare alike, renounces the long and fondly indulged delusion, and fixes his hope of heaven on the basis, which the gospel directs; and that the scoffer and the profligate gives up his contempt of truth and duty, resigns his vices, and, humble and broken hearted,

commences a life of virtue and piety. But what effect has the change in their characters upon their companions in infidelity, error and guilt? Perhaps, not an individual, influenced by their conduct, joins the standard of Christ. Even their proselytes, those, whom they initiated in the mysteries of infidelity, whom they instructed in falsehood and trained to vice, now disregard them and refuse to relinquish opinions, which they taught them, and to forsake courses of sin, which they first prompted them to pursue.— They find a wide disparity between the efforts, requisite to seduce, and those, necessary to reform; and it becomes a source of the keenest remorse, and of torturing regret, that they have done irreparable mischief, that they have led astray, from truth, virtue and salvation, those, whom it is beyond their power to recal from their wanderings. It is a surprising fact, and yet not more surprising, than true, that the opinions of a man shall be, with many, little short of oracular, while those opinions are in favor of scepticism, of error and vice; but, if his principles are entirely and almost miraculously changed, and changed undeniably from full and solemn conviction, he shall forfeit, perhaps, the whole of his influence, even with his warmest admirers, and loudest encomiasts.

But, however strange and inexplicable the little effect which other circumstances produce upon the feelings and conduct of mankind, may appear, nothing can surpass, in singularity, the inefficacy of death-bed retractions and warnings, and nothing can be more flimsy and futile, than the

pretences, upon which they are often disregarded.

It is, to a very wide extent, the fact, that unbelievers, at the near approach of death, virtually, if not expressly, renounce their sentiments, as unfounded and fatal, and, except where animated by the hopes of the Gospel, leave the world in anxiety and alarm, if not in horror. The close of Voltaire's life was a scene that might make the most callous heart ache. Hume, as his nurse declares, "died in horror," and the very account of Dr. Smith, which ascribes to him so much cheerfulness, affords no slight ground for the suspicion, that the whole truth has not been told. The final hour of Gibbon was cheerless and wretched. The last days of Paine were days of gloom and wo, and decisively prove, that he had no confidence, that his rejection of Christianity was well-founded, or rather they fully evince, that he was visited with tormenting forebodings, that the religion, which he had scorned and reviled, would be found a religion from God. There is indeed, occasionally an individual, who maintains, to the last, the semblance of an unwavering adherence to his principles of unbelief. But it is obviously a daring and determined show of confidence, supported by studied thoughtlessness and peculiar hardihood of mind, not the result of sober and dispassionate conviction; a show to which false notions of honor, and fears of the disgrace of his party and of the taunt of cowardice, together with the pride of self-consistency, impel him. The mass of the votaries of infidelity, however, and among them some of her ablest and boldest champions, as they

draw near the grave tremble, and if they forbear explicitly acknowledging the truth of revelation, distinctly manifest, that the assurance of their unbelief is broken, and that they are haunted by agonizing apprehensions, that at the bar of Christ they must answer for the denial of his mission, their rejection of his instructions, and their contempt of his authority, for the obloquy, ridicule and scorn, which they have cast upon him, upon his cause, and his friends, and for that corruption and guilt and woe, into which they have aided in plunging their fellow-men. What effect have circumstances, like these, upon their brethren in infidelity, who survive? Little, at the best, and perhaps none whatever; unless to prompt them to express contemptuous pity for what they term their weakness, and to hold up their fears to bitter derision. They proceed on, in the direction, which they were previously pursuing, till death comes upon them, and in their turn, they prove wretched monitors to others, who refuse to take warning.

They may not, indeed, be destitute of reasons to bring forward in vindication of their conduct. As an opiate to their consciences, and the means of preserving the tranquillity of their minds uninterrupted, they may allege, that, with weakness of body, mental imbecility is produced, and that, for a man to renounce infidelity on his death-bed is, therefore, no proof, that it is actually untenable, and deserves no serious regard. A debilitated understanding and the instinctive dread of death, which is felt by all, conspiring with the dejected and gloomy countenances of his friends, sink his spirits, render him timid and superstitious

and haunt his mind with fantastic and visionary terrors.—Hence, his opinions possess no weight and can justly claim no deference.

To this reasoning of the unbeliever, however specious it may appear, it might be sufficient to reply, that infidels, who have given up their sceptical notions, have, in numerous instances, died in the full possession of all their intellectual powers. But instead of insisting upon this fact, we observe, that a man, when his mind is enfeebled by disease, provided he be able to think, to remember and to reason at all, will adhere with not less firmness, than when in health, to those opinions, of the truth of which he was before certain. What, if some mathematical proposition, which, when in health, he had demonstrated to his entire satisfaction, should be mentioned to a sick man? Would he in the least call in question its correctness, although then unable again to go through the process, by which the demonstration was accomplished? Would he not say at once, "When in health, and in the complete enjoyment and vigorous exercise of my understanding, I long and carefully examined that proposition, and effectually demonstrated its truth? I again and again went through the demonstration, I omitted no care, I grudged no labour; and possess the firmest assurance, an assurance, not to be shaken, that there was no flaw in the premises, no mistake in the process, and no error in the conclusion. The truth of the proposition I, therefore, still believe, without a shadow of doubt."

Why does not the dying infidel reason in a similar manner? Why does he not say, "When in health, when my mind was strong and ac-



tive, when my memory was sound, and my judgment clear, I examined the truth of the Christian religion. I investigated the subject with a circumspection, a diligence and an impartiality, commensurate with the sacred character, which that religion claims, and with the momentous consequence of the interests, which it involves. I am sure, that there was no negligence, no prejudice, and no error in my examination, and the result was a complete and unhesitating conviction, that it falsely pretends to a divine original. I am now brought low by disease. My mind largely participates in the debility and languor of my body. I cannot again go over my inquiries. I cannot summon up to view all the facts, on which my reasoning was grounded, nor retrace the course of argumentation, by which I arrived at my conclusion. But I am certain, that it was fairly drawn, and that it rested on a substantial basis. To all the interrogations of mankind, "what if you are deceived?" to all the suggestions of weak and suspicious timidity, and to all the chimeras of officious and busy fancy, I can reply, that once I had an assurance of the truth of my opinions, supported by reasons, ample and satisfactory. These reasons I cannot now call to remembrance and examine; but my assurance I still retain, and I can boldly bid all dreams of danger, all imaginary terrors, defiance.—They disturb not my sure and settled repose; they interrupt not my firm and tried tranquillity."

Why does not the dying infidel, by reflections like these, sustain his drooping courage and soothe his throbbing heart? If he ever possessed a full assurance of the falsehood of Christianity, an assurance,

established on a solid foundation, why does he tremble, as he approaches the grave, and why, in that awful hour, which tries the soul, does he renounce, as delusive and ruinous, his irreligious tenets? The truth is, that he never possessed any such assurance, substantiated by adequate proof, and to possess it does not lie within the range of possibility. The infidel disbelieved, because he was hostile to the truths, which the gospel contains, to the restraints, which it imposes, to the duties, which it demands, and to the sanctions, which it exhibits. Its doctrines are abasing to that pride of intellect, which almost scorns to receive lessons from heavenly wisdom, and to that pride of virtue, which arrogates to itself distinguished excellence and abundant merit. Its restraints curb passions, which he is eager to indulge, and deter him from courses of criminal gratification, which he is bent on pursuing. Its duties are an irksome drudgery, at which all the feelings of his soul revolt. Its sanctions are tremendous, and to sin, with the persuasion of a day of reckoning and of a state of fearful retribution, would poison all the delights of iniquity and mingle gall in the cup of pleasure. Because unwilling to believe, he doubts. He is able to start here and there a difficulty, and to conjure up here and there an objection; none of them, to a humble, well-informed and dispassionate mind, of serious moment. With these he fortifies his doubts, till, finally, they rise to a degree of strength, bordering on persuasion. The alarming aspect of death renders him honest. It dashes to the ground the shield, which corrupt desires and abandoned habits had

interposed between him and conviction, and truth flashes upon his mind to alarm and torment him. He at length knows, that he never had reasons, sufficient to warrant him in rejecting and reviling Christianity ; and he now feels, in his inmost soul, a deep and an involuntary impression, that it is true, and awakes to anguish and horror.

We feel ourselves impelled to pause and observe here, how strong the evidence in support of Christianity must be, since it has carried conviction to the minds of millions of the wisest and most learned of mankind, by whom this religion has been not only revered and loved, but also cherished and defended by their labors and often by their blood ; and since none of its adversaries, however pre-eminent for intellectual greatness, and however signalized, by the extent of their researches, and the compass and variety of their knowledge, nor even all its foes, by their combined efforts, have been able to disprove its claims, so as ensure the unbeliever confidence and tranquillity, in that awful hour, when he is called to go and make the eventful and momentous trial, whether it be from God, or not.

The reasoning by which infidels attempt to account, without injury to their cause, for the dismay and retractions of their brethren, when on a dying bed, is most inconclusive and fallacious. It fails totally of solving the difficulties, which it professes to remove, and, were they not in love with darkness, did they not wish to shun conviction, they would read, in the last hours of those, who have rejected Christianity, appalling lessons, on the weakness and the dangers of unbelief. But, with

infatuation, as blind, as it is deplorable and fatal, they disregard every admonition, they close their minds against every appeal, addressed either to their judgments, their consciences, or their hearts, and press on to that awful precipice, down which those, who have gone before them, have plunged beyond the reach of mercy and the visits of hope.—Often, in the closing period of life, those, who have been cheered in health by the soothing persuasion, that all, of every character, are destined to heaven, find their belief shaken, become convinced, that they have been resting upon the sand, and dare no longer trust to so frail a basis their eternal hopes. In bitter retrospection and tormenting fears, they pass the remnant of their days, and in agonizing anxiety, they enter the world of spirits ; except, in those favored instances, in which, from humble faith and heart-felt contrition, hope arises to irradiate and bless the hour of their departure. Others, however, who accorded with them in sentiment, are perhaps, only led to regret the influence of disease upon the mind, paralyzing its operations and inspiring it with chimerical apprehensions, or they proceed to deride them, as the dupes of cowardice and superstition, who basely desert, at last, the cause, which they had espoused. In that trying day, the man of virtue, who had disbelieved the reality of vital religion, and who had adopted and strenuously maintained the opinion, that mere common-place morality would answer in the room of Christian holiness, and the lax religionist, who had fixed his dependance on the rites of his church, on outward regularity, and a decent attention to the form of godliness,

become alarmed, give up, as untenable, their refuges of lies, and obtain no relief from the goadings of remorse, and the apprehensions of fear, unless, in mercy, they are led to find peace at the foot of the cross. But those, who resembled them, instead of being led to amend their own opinions, ascribe their change of sentiment to imbecility of mind, generated by disease, perhaps sneeringly pity their delusion, and continue to encourage themselves with the shadow, while they coldly disregard, or contemptuously spurn the substance, of moral and religious excellence.

Those, who have neglected the blessings of the gospel, and lived only for the present world, when they come to lie on a dying bed, unless the mind be stupified, and the feelings blunted by the deadening operation of disease, or they be cursed with so sore a judgment, as a seared conscience and a complete dereliction of the Divine Spirit, awake to a sense of their guilt and their folly. Bitterly do they deplore their disregard of God and salvation, the means of grace undervalued and slighted, the precious day of mercy and hope prodigally wasted, or grossly misemployed, and the wonderful patience of heaven contemned or heinously abused. With gladness, eager and joyful beyond expression, were it in their power, would they recal the time, which has passed away, and possess once more the opportunities of becoming wise and holy and happy, which are gone for ever. With hearts, swelling with anguish, and with eyes, gushing with tears, do they bewail their infatuation; and, in strains of solemn admonition, and of warm and pathetic in-

treaty, do they urge those, around them, not to esteem religion, a subject, which demands attention only by the by, and not to defer, till their sun is going down, all concern for the soul, all thought of eternity, all preparation for heaven. He, who has not again and again witnessed death-bed relentings and death-bed regrets and warnings, cannot often have ministered at the couches of the sick and dying, or often have been present to behold the scenes there exhibited, scenes, which, if any method of instruction were, of itself, adequate to teach man wisdom, would leave none, who come within reach of their influence, uninstructed and unreformed.

What is the effect, which occurrences, like these, produce upon those who observe them? They may make a transient impression, may excite heart-felt commiseration, draw forth the tear of pity, and impel to some laudable purposes, that they will carefully avoid a condition so wretched, a close of life so awful. But the intervention of a few days deadens their sensibility, allays their fears, erases from their memory the vivid recollection of the recent spectacle of wo, and gives to the winds all thought and design of an immediate and effectual attention to their immortal interests.

Often, and deplorably often, is it the fact, that individuals, who have hung suspended over the grave, whose bosoms have there been wrung with remorse and agitated by fear, and who have with prayers and tears implored longer life, that they might seek and find salvation, when, beyond all hope, they have been called back from the gates of death, forget their feelings and intreaties.



their purposes and vows and pass on as heedless, as before, of religion, of judgment and eternity. Perhaps, with weak and disgraceful shame, they may blush on account of their alarm, or, with shocking effrontery and presumption, they may even laugh at their terrors, as idle and ignominious.

Thus to disregard the retractions and warnings, which death-beds afford, is to act with something, worse, than the thoughtlessness and delusion of childhood, which never thinks of dangers, which are out of sight. It is a near approach to idiot folly or maniac infatuation.

"A death-bed's a detector of the heart."

Awful and alarming, beyond all that we may now imagine, it will fearfully try our souls. It will render us honest and rouse us to a knowledge of our real characters. It will brush away the deception, which, we may have practised upon ourselves, convince us of the falsehood of our principles, and display to us the unsoundness of our virtues and the futility of our hopes. It will operate upon our minds, as upon those of others. If we act with common prudence, therefore, we shall fear to rest our dearest interests, upon a foundation, which crumbles from beneath them, when most they need support. The tenets, which they at last renounce, if we hold them fast, till the closing scene, we shall then find to be untenable. The confidence and expectations, which fail them, will also fail us, and into that wo, and ruin, into which they sink, shall we descend.

Happy would it be for all, would they learn to profit by the errors and the falls of others. When

Vo XVIII. NO. 9.

those, who have coincided with us in our opinions, and who have accompanied us in our practice, abandon us, and embrace different principles, and enter upon a new course of life, it is a warning to us, to survey the ground, on which we stand, and sound discretion must loudly demand, that we should awake to the most full, rigid, cautious, and dispassionate examination of our sentiments and our conduct. If we would comply with what is alike the injunction of duty and interest, we must make it an object of constant and watchful care, to adopt no principle, to perform no action and to rely on no traits of character, which will not abide every trial, the strictest test of divine truth, the severest scrutiny of our own consciences, the solemn trial of a dying hour, and the fiery trial of a day of judgment. [Adviser.

---

*On the Application of Prophecy to passing Events.*

**T**HE prophecies of God, given us in his word, were communicated to the church for the most important purposes, and have ever been productive of the most salutary effects. They were designed, and they have ever had the effect, to confirm the faith of the people of God, to support them under their afflictions, to strengthen their attachment to the interests of Zion, and to engage their steady fidelity in the service of their Lord. They have also been a perpetual shield to the believer against the assaults of infidelity, affording, at all times, an irresistible argument in confirmation of the testimony which God has given to his people. But, as

T t

if these privileges of the word of prophecy were not sufficient, it has usually been one of the errors of the visible church, to make the divine prophecies, to a certain extent a subject of curiosity, to aid the speculations of the statesman and the philosopher, or for the support of some favorite human theory.

In our attention to this subject, we shall first consider some of the principal objects for which the prophecies contained in the scriptures are evidently given : and then take notice of the impropriety of making a hasty application of divine predictions to present events.

The holy scriptures abound with prophecy, and this is one of the striking characteristics of their divine original. It is the prerogative of God alone to remove the veil from futurity and declare events that are yet to come. Man "knows not what shall be on the morrow." The earliest prophecy that is found in the word of God is given by himself, in his memorable address to the parents of our race immediately after their great transgression. According to the order in which they sinned against him, he first addresses the serpent, then the woman, and then the man. In his address to each are found declarations and threatenings which respected all future times, and which have been performed in every succeeding age ; while the address to the serpent contains a promise of grace, in behalf of those whom he had seduced, embracing all the blessedness ever to be enjoyed by the children of men. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed : it shall bruise thy head, and thou

shalt bruise his heel." All the succeeding promises of Christ, all the prophetic declarations concerning the blessedness to be derived from his mediatorial work, and the perpetual conflict to be maintained between sin and righteousness, are no more than confirmations and illustrations of this first divine prophecy. In after times, many of the patriarchs and saints, as well as those who are appropriately denominated prophets, were endued, at times, by the Spirit of God, with the gift of prophecy, and declared events that were to come. The most of the prophecies contained in the scriptures have been fulfilled. Many, however, remain unaccomplished, and we have evidence sufficient that all these will be fulfilled in the holy appointments of God.

A primary object, for which the prophecies and promises of God have been given and recorded in his word, is, evidently, to fix the attention of men on him and his government, in all the events of his providence. Nothing is more characteristic of the wicked than a forgetfulness of God. "God is not in all their thoughts ;" and the language of their hearts is "Depart from us ; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. Through the prevalent influence of sin, all are inclined to forget the character, the presence, and the government of Jehovah, who ought, at all times, to be feared and loved. The heavy judgments which were sent upon Nebuchadnezzar are represented as designed to bring him to a thorough conviction "that the heavens do rule." It is easy and natural to view the hand of God in some remarkable and uncommon events that take

place, while, in many others, his holy providence is very apt to be overlooked. In great events, which occur in a very unexpected manner, in which human agency has little or no concern, all are ready to think of an invisible Being as their author. But in the more common occurrences of life, in events accomplished, principally, through the instrumentality of men, we are very liable to forget our God in an earnest attention to the weak and dependent agents, who are merely the ministers of his will. It is easy to discern the hand of God in the destruction of Sennacherib's army, while the conquests of the Reformers, by which a great part of Christendom was rescued from the dominion of Papal corruption, are imputed to natural causes. It is also natural for us to contemplate Gideon and David, and Maccabeus, as fighting the battles of the Lord, and supported by his holy guidance and protection. While the conquests of Agesilaus, of Timur, and of Cortes, are viewed as originating in human design, and executed by human valor. The wisdom of Moses, Solomon, and Josiah, is readily ascribed to the illuminations of the Spirit of God, while that of Lycurgus, Numa, and Peter of Russia, is supposed to be the natural product of the human intellect.

The scriptures teach us, in the fullest manner, that all men are the creatures of God, always dependent on him for all corporal and intellectual efforts, and that all intelligent beings, no less than the material world, are ministers of his will for the execution of his holy designs. Moses and Sennacherib, Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar,

were actively employed in their great pursuits till they had accomplished the purposes of heaven; when their work was done, they were dismissed from the employments of human life. As the exercise of divine government over all human actions, is one of those truths which is hard for the human mind to believe, and still harder for the human heart to love, it is inculcated in various ways in the word of God. Of these, one of the most impressive is prophecy. The greater part of the distinguished events that have taken place, particularly those which most interest the attention of men, can easily be found to have been predicted by the prophets of God. While politicians are engaged in their critical speculations, and historians are tracing the causes of events, the humble believer looks at the divine testimonies and finds these great transactions clearly foreshewn by the holy prophets. On such a discovery, the reflection is irresistible:—If God had predicted these events, he had purposed their accomplishment; and it must be his unseen hand that controlled all the preparatory measures, that guided all the agents, that directed every instrument, by which they were finally brought to pass. If God declared to Abraham that his posterity should be strangers in a land that was not theirs and there be oppressed and afflicted for a long period, and afterwards be brought forth with a great deliverance and established in that land of promise, while their oppressors should experience a terrible destruction;—the reader of sacred history, finding the performance



of these promises, perceives, unavoidably, that Joseph, Moses, Joshua and the Pharaohs, with all the other great instruments in these transactions, must have been under the immediate guidance of heaven, that the holy providence of God must have been constantly operative in the accomplishment of all these events. The most of ancient history is occupied with the transactions of the Assyrian, Medo-Persian, Macedonian, and Roman Empires. In the prophecy of Daniel, the successive rise, conquests, character, and fall, of these great empires, are repeatedly pointed out, in such a manner that no attentive reader of the prophecy, who is acquainted with ancient history, can avoid making the application. The reflection arises of course, the government of God was immediately and constantly concerned in all the events connected with the progress, and changes of those heathen empires. And if the events of those kingdoms were under the steady control of Jehovah, with all the various characters that were concerned in them, the same must be true of all kingdoms and of all the children of men. He reigns continually, his counsel must stand and he will do all his pleasure.

Another important object in the gift of prophecy seems to have been to confirm the truth of divine revelation. Prophetic declarations are interspersed through all parts of the holy scriptures. There is scarcely one of the sacred books which does not contain either express predictions of future events, or prophetic representations of something to take place in future times. Every age has seen, in a greater or less degree, the fulfil-

ment of these prophetic representations. In the prophetic testimony of Moses, a little before his death, he gives a sketch of the history of Israel from his days to the most distant times. Every age since, and probably many yet to come, have been, and will be, able, by recurring to the character and circumstances of that people, to see the faithful fulfilment of his predictions. The prophet Daniel, and the apostle John have given chronological prophecies; following the course of human events, and extending from their own time to very distant periods. Daniel's continues, at least, to the millennium; John's continues to the end of the world. There is of course no time, in this long period, in which some portion of their predictions are not in a state of fulfilment. The many prophetic declarations in the scriptures, embrace all periods, from the time in which they were delivered to the end of the world. And it would be difficult to point out a period which is not embraced by many different predictions of sacred writ.—The divine prophecies are not only seen now fulfilling, in every age, but their accomplishment is most clearly verified by the testimony of history. History is the mirror of prophecy. The events which it records answer to the predictions of the holy prophets, and show that what they have spoken has come to pass. None can declare future events, and declare them truly, except by the power and teaching of God. "When the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known that the Lord hath truly sent him." The greater part of the scriptures having been given by prophets, by those whose

prophecies are confirmed as divine by their fulfilment, their whole testimony is established as of divine authority. All the scriptures are connected and form but one system of moral truth, the respective parts mutually depending upon each other. The prophetic parts being established as of divine authority, and these parts being so great a portion of the inspired volume, extending through the whole, the believer says with a humble confidence, "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God.*" As the lapse of years necessarily increases the evidence of the divine authority of the prophecies, the church is constantly furnished with increasing evidence that the rule of their faith is the testimony of God.

A further important benefit of the gift of prophecy is to animate the hopes and encourage the exertions of the people of God. During all the militant state of the church, its trials, its sufferings, and perplexities, are so great, that its friends are in constant need of special and divine support. To this effect the sacred prophecies are perfectly suited. They are not so minute and specifically definite as to discourage exertion, yet sufficiently determinate to engage the confidence and animate the efforts of the friends of truth. God has promised the protection and perpetuity of the church in such terms as to dispel every doubt. Though he has not told to what a degree of depression and suffering it may be subjected, he has assured his people sufficiently that he will never forsake them, that he will never be unmindful of their wants, that he will never be inattentive to their efforts and their prayers in times of

affliction. Such promises place the people of God on the best grounds, where they have every motive to labor and pray for the interests of Zion. If they could read in prophecy, with the clearness of historic testimony, the exact scenes through which God would carry his church, they would naturally conclude that their own efforts must be wholly unnecessary and unavailing. If, on the other hand, there were no predictions or promises for their encouragement, in view of the hostility and the prowess of evil, they would often despair of the cause of righteousness, and conclude its interests to be utterly hopeless. Thus, diligence, zeal, watchfulness, prayer, which compose the best parts of the Christian character, would, in a great measure, disappear. Previous to the incarnation of Christ, the promises of his coming and his great redemption were so positive and explicit, that the church rested upon them with a confident assurance. Their ideas respecting his character, his work, and the manner of his appearance, as well as the exact time of his coming, were various and defective, but they confided in his coming. The same observations are applicable to the state of the church at the present day, and for several ages past, with regard to the millennium. Very various are the sentiments prevalent in the Christian world with regard to that period, yet to come, when the church shall enjoy its highest state of worldly prosperity. When that period shall commence, how long it will continue, and to what a degree of holiness and blessedness the church will attain, are questions wholly unsettled; yet, that

such a period is coming, is a truth in which the people of God have long had an unshaken confidence. This prospect is the animating motive which supports the church under its afflictions, and which encourages all the exertions which are made for the furtherance of the gospel. The word of prophecy is sufficiently plain and sufficiently understood to produce this effect; while, at the same time, such a degree of obscurity rests upon the prophecies not yet accomplished, as to teach the friends of truth not to confide in their own calculations, but to rely with a humble confidence on the holy allotments of divine wisdom, and wait till the end shall come.

We might mention other things, but these appear to be the principal and the more important objects for which the divine prophecies were given. Now, it is manifest that these objects may be sufficiently effected, without a knowledge of the minute applications of prophecy to the events of its accomplishment, at least any further than to the events of past times. We know enough of the general fulfilment of all prophecy, but especially of those parts of it which have received their undoubted fulfilment, to convince us of the perfect moral government of God over all human events, of the truth and inspiration of the holy scriptures, of the security and ultimate prosperity of the Christian church, that all the friends of righteousness have every necessary motive to fix their attachment and rest all their prospects upon its holy interests.

We shall now consider the propriety of making applications of prophecy to passing events. This practice has prevailed with the

readers of the scriptures in every age, though to a greater degree at some times than at others. Few principles are more deeply implanted in the human mind than a desire of knowing the events of futurity. With many, this principle is peculiarly strong, and will lead to any attempts that may afford a prospect of gratifying the desire. For this purpose the prophecies of the scripture are often examined with much solicitude to enable us to make some calculation of occurrences in time to come. In this way we make an application of prophecy to recent and present events, in order to arrive as near as possible to futurity, and by connecting present events with those which must soon follow, we determine what will take place hereafter. A few observations will show the unprofitableness and impropriety of such a practice.

1. It appears to be a violation of the evident design for which the prophecies were given. It is not necessary in order to obtain the great objects of prophecy, so far as those objects can be determined. Perhaps there are no prophecies found on sacred record more explicit than those given by the angel Gabriel to the prophet Daniel. Yet when he says, "O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" he is told "Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." There seems to have always been a mystery cast upon the minds of those who have studied the prophecies, whenever they proceed to particular calculations upon future events, even in cases where it would seem so clear that they could not be mistaken, which can-



not be accounted for in any other way than the immediate purpose of the most High. God told Abraham that his posterity should sojourn in Egypt four hundred and thirty years. That declaration was undoubtedly known to Moses and the elders of Israel. Yet they appear to have been perfectly surprised when the time of its accomplishment arrived. The time of the coming of Christ is determined by many things contained in the ancient prophecies which were in the hands of the Jews; and particularly by the memorable prophecy of Daniel of seventy weeks from the restoration of Jerusalem to Messiah the Prince. Still the church of God was utterly at a loss with regard to the particular time of his appearing, and he came at a time when he was not expected. From all that yet appears there is every reason to conclude that the church will remain in the same uncertainty in which they are at the present time, concerning the commencement of the millennium, till that event shall have taken place. God most wisely causes these things so to be, that his word may not be a vehicle to gratify an idle curiosity, instead of teaching us the duties of humility, obedience, and love.

2. We do not know, sufficiently, the nature of passing events, to adapt them to the explication of prophecy. The prophecies usually respect objects and events which are of an extensive nature, in which great numbers of individuals are concerned, which regard the wars, and revolutions, and changes of nations. It is well known that events of this kind are much better understood, years after their occurrence, than when they

have recently taken place. When the various colourings and representations of party, of prejudice, of design, become exposed, when the characters and designs of the principal actors become known, when the secret springs and causes of events are explained by the evolutions of time, when the extent, the operation, and effects of such events are brought to light, they may then be understood with such a degree of precision as to be profitably applied to the illustration of sacred prophecy. But such a knowledge of important events cannot be obtained, usually, till after many years from their occurrence. The history of the Reformation is better known now, after a lapse of near three hundred years, than it was during the occurrence of those great events, or for twenty or thirty years after they had taken place.

3. We are always apt to overrate the importance of present events. Those of former times not having past under our own observation, we having never felt an immediate interest in their issue, they have never excited that anxious solicitude, nor have appeared of that importance to the mind, as those in which we take an immediate interest. Under the influence of such impressions, to a considerable extent we form an estimate of the comparative importance of recent events. The extraordinary character, whose designs have kept the nations of Europe in a constant agitation for a number of years past, whose actions have astonished the world; at the end of his days, will undoubtedly, have accomplished a part of the declarations of prophecy, in the great scheme of divine grace, whereby God is bringing

down the man of sin and preparing the way for the universal reign of Christ on earth. But the particular part which he is acting we cannot now point out in the words of the prophets; and it will probably appear, in the final accomplishment of these great designs, that the part which he has acted is far less extensive than has been ascribed to him by his astonished cotemporaries. Good men, no less than others, often misjudge in these things. It is an almost invariable opinion of the friends of truth, that the errors and wickedness of their own time exceed those of preceeding times; and perhaps there has never been a period when good people have supposed that the general state of morals was improving. Yet such times have certainly been. It has also been common with Christians, when they have seen great revivals of religion, with animating displays of God's power and grace, to conclude that the time of the church's deliverance was near. When they see exertions making for the spread of the gospel, and those exertions attended with success, they are ready to conclude that they shall soon see the desire of their souls, that their hopes will soon be realized. The exertions of the Christian world for the spread of the gospel, at the present day, are great; they are most important, and, undoubtedly, the necessary means by which the great promises of grace will be accomplished. They are, and they will be attended with the divine blessing. But if these efforts continue, according to the hopes and prayers of all good men, and continue to increase in the same degree that they have for many years past, and to be attended with

an equal success, we must still look to a distant period for the time when Jews and Gentiles shall have universally embraced the divine Saviour.

We often make an undue estimate of the importance of present occurrences, from a defective knowledge of those of former times. Were we more perfectly acquainted with the history of the world and of the church, with the many striking dispensations of divine providence which have distinguished past periods, than we usually are, we should make a very different estimate of the magnitude of passing events.

4. It is, most clearly, the purpose of God, that the appointments of his holy government should be veiled in a degree of mystery to the understandings of men. "Clouds and darkness are round about him." Could the divine prophecies be clearly understood, in all their minute applications, or even to that extent as we now understand those of ancient times, the great events of divine providence would no longer be inexplicable, the world would cease to be confounded by his unintelligible appointments, God would be brought forth from the great deep, if we may so speak, his pavilion of darkness be set open, and man admitted a witness of the counsels of Jehovah. It is not necessary to reason on the unfitness of such a scene, it being sufficient to say God has purposed that it shall be otherwise.

These reasons are naturally suggested in a view of this subject, which seem to show sufficiently that it is unwise and unsafe to attempt making particular explications of prophecy in reference to present and future events.

It is unwise, as we know but little of the true character and tendency of passing events; as it is evidently not the design of the Most High that the word of prophecy should be applied in such a manner; as it is wholly unnecessary in order to vindicate the utility and importance of the prophetic writings.—It is unsafe, as we are unable to make correct explanations of prophecy in this way. Writers upon prophecy, who build their respective systems upon recent and passing events, are insensibly led into calculations on the time to come. And it is most commonly the case that their calculations are frustrated by events. In such things God seems to delight to disappoint the counsels of the wise, to show them that his providence is his own, that it is not for us “to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power.” Calculations of this kind are most commonly for the gratification of curiosity, or to answer some human purpose, and are not necessary to promote the interests of Zion. Our concern is to comply with the precepts of God, leaving the disposal of all things with him.

Still it is not to be understood, that the study of the prophecies is

not proper and useful. Because we cannot know all they contain, we are not to resolve we will know nothing. Many of the writers upon prophecy have done a very great service to the Christian world, and have greatly strengthened the interests of the church. The writings of Mede, Newton, Faber, and others, in our language, have greatly contributed to strengthen the faith, to confirm the hopes, and animate the exertions of Christians, in obedience and duty. There are innumerable moral truths contained in the prophecies always instructive, they give a most striking exhibition of the divine character, they bring into view many of the most illustrious characters that have adorned the church on earth. As we have repeatedly observed, many of the declarations of divine prophecy, have, undoubtedly, received their accomplishment. These are a proper subject of studious interpretation. Explications of these, by events found in history, are eminently useful and instructive, and afford great assistance to the people of God. All scripture is profitable for us, the wicked will wander in darkness, but the wise shall understand.

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

.....

*Eleventh Anniversary of the British and Foreign Bible Society.*

ON Wednesday, the 3d of May, 1815, was held, at FREE MASON'S HALL, the Eleventh Anniversary of the British and Foreign Bible Society. At twelve o'clock, Lord Teignmouth, the President,—supported by the Bish-

ops of Norwich and St. David's, the Lords Gambier, Headley, Calthorpe, &c. the Deans of Wells, Conner, &c. Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, M. P. Thomas Babington, Esq. M. P. J. D. Porcher, Esq. M. P. together with a numerous assemblage of Gentry, Clergy, &c. among whom were the Ministers of the Russian, Ger-



man, Dutch, and Danish Churches, in London,—took the Chair, and, with the occasional assistance of the Rev. W. Dealtry, read the Report in the audience of a Meeting, in which the Representatives, both Lay and Clerical, of almost all the Auxiliary Societies, appeared to be convened. From the mass of facts which the Report detailed, his Lordship the President was under the necessity of omitting a considerable proportion. But the whole, together with a voluminous Appendix, is in the press, and will speedily be ready for delivery.

The following is the Statement of Issues of Bibles and Testaments, and of the Funds, as represented in the Report :

*The Issue of Copies of the Scriptures, from March 31, 1814, to March 31, 1815, had been—*  
126,156 Bibles. | 123,776 Testaments.

Making a Total, issued from the commencement of the Institution to that period, of

516,479 Bibles. | 718,788 Testaments.

In all, 1,235,257 Copies ; exclusive of about 64,025 circulated at the charge of the Society from the Depositories abroad : making a total of ONE MILLION, TWO HUNDRED AND NINETY NINE THOUSAND, TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTY TWO Copies, already circulated by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

The Receipts of the Year have been—

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Annual Subscriptions	3272	10	6			
Donations and Life do.	2429	9	11			
Congregational Collections	1406	7	8			
				7108	8	1

Legacies	1312	18	0
Dividends, &c.	1703	10	0
Contributions from Auxiliary Societies	61848	11	9
Sales of Bibles and Testaments, the greater part of which were purchased by Bible Associations	27560	6	5
Sale of reports, &c.	391	1	3
			<hr/> 27921 7 8
Total	99894	15	6

The Expenditure of the Year 81012 12 5

Obligations of the Society, including Orders given for Bibles and Testaments, about 40000 0 0

After the Report had been read (during the course of which his Royal Highness the Duke of Kent entered the room) his Lordship the President apologized for the unavoidable absence of the Bishops of Salisbury and Cloyne, occasioned, that of the former, by urgent affairs ; of the latter, by an illness which confined him to his room. The business then proceeded in the usual order.

The Hon. and Very Rev. the Dean of WELLS (now Bishop Elect of Gloucester) moved that the report be adopted and printed ; and spake in substance as follows :

“ My Lord, &c.

“ The unexpected absence of His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, is a subject of great regret to us all ; but to me more especially, as it has devolved a Motion so important upon one so little qualified in any respect to do it justice. I have to move the adoption and printing of the Report : a Report, which details the progress of the Bible in the course of the year, through the means of the British and Foreign Bible Society ; a Report which communi-

cates the triumphs of the Word of God ; of that word, which is the vehicle of Divine truth, which is the herald and the instrument of everlasting salvation. A subject so mighty in extent and importance, seems to overwhelm a mind of very common capacity, and to close lips of very little readiness and fluency : but happily for the Mover and for you, the extraordinary fulness and ability of the Report, anticipate, as it were, the deficiencies of the speaker, and allow him to confine himself to a few brief sketches, and a general outline. The late successes, and the future prospects of the Society, are the two subjects which naturally present themselves to the mind, as the main results of what we have heard to day.

“ Among the European harvests of the year, Holland and Russia stand prominent. The Netherlands have scarcely enjoyed their independence a year, and yet in that short interval, a National Bible Society has been formed, containing thirty two Branches, and occupying all the chief cities of that populous country. We gave the signal, and may be permitted to rejoice in our singular success on this occasion. The first division of our troops which was sent to aid that people in their efforts for the recovery of her freedom, were in a manner accompanied by the heralds of the Bible Society ; and we were thus enabled to repay, but with a far superior boon, the benefits which we had received from that country. She sent us, above a century ago, our liberator from temporal and even religious slavery, King William ; we have now, in return, sent her the grand deliver-

er from spiritual bondage, the blessed Word of God ; before which, under the influence of the Spirit, every tyrant of the soul will fall, and the glorious liberty of the sons of God be established.

“ Russia is the next object of grateful contemplation. She entered her course a year before : and her increase of contribution, zeal, and exertion, exceed, in the past year, our liveliest expectations. Her triple progress in two years is truly astonishing.

“ The first step of the Bible Society was to print and distribute the Word of God for the professors of what may be called the foreign religions ; namely, the four millions of inhabitants, whose mode of worship and discipline differ from the ritual of the Greek Church. The second step soon followed : the full acquiescence of the Synod in dispersing the Bible in their native tongue amongst those who adhere to the National Establishment. And the third has now crowned the work : the cordial union of all Christians throughout that vast empire, in preparing the Scriptures for their innumerable subjects and neighbors in Asia.

“ In the Armenian version, which the Russian Society is about to publish, they are even already throwing out a link which will, ere long, unite them in the grand cause with their confederate and competitor, the Bible Society in Bengal. From thence, another Armenian version is about to proceed, and the fellow-workers in the cause of God from Petersburg to Calcutta will, ere long, we trust, join hands in a middle point : thus experiencing the truth of the assertion, that no distance of place, no tract of mountains, wilds and seas, no

once apprehended opposition of interests, can keep those asunder whom the Bible draws together. To the second quarter of the globe, we are thence led to turn our eyes—and there we behold India, by this time, blessed with translations of the Bible into a large proportion of her different and diversified languages. The appetite for the food seems to increase with the diligence and success in providing it. It is impossible to supply Bibles with sufficient rapidity to keep pace with the demand among the natives.

“The Star in the East seems to be rising with unexampled splendor, and promise of a glorious day; just as he, who was one of the first to bend our eyes and our charity in that direction, is removed from our sight. The mortal part of Buchanan is committed to the earth; but his immortal soul ascends to heaven, where we humbly trust, through the Saviour, whom he loved, that, amidst multitudes of Indian converts, whom he will have been, through his publications, instrumental in turning to righteousness, he will shine as the stars for ever and ever.

“To the third quarter, America, our view is next directed: and, thanks be to the God of Peace! now, without any distortion of jealousy; any check of prejudice, and enmity. Individuals through our Society, had been long at peace, while the national warfare continued: but now the blessed influence has extended from the members, and the body, to the head; and we have no further contention, than to provoke one another unto love and good works—no further rivalry, than

the godly emulation of dispersing the Bible and its fruits through our respective Hemispheres. The Bible, during the war, first joined the right hands of fellowship across the Atlantick; and the whole nations have at length hailed and acknowledged the omen, and sealed the bond.

“Nearly 70 Bible Societies are now in action in that country; and they own in ours, their parent, not only in blood, but in example and labor of love.

“It is surely not a little remarkable, that almost at the very moment when the peace (as we trusted, of unexampled solidity,) was suddenly rent asunder by the return of the foe to that county, where the Bible Society has as yet made no sensible progress; it should have been ratified (and we will hope with bright prospects of permanence) with our transatlantic brethren, who have been long our imitators and rivals in this glorious work of diffusing spiritual peace.

“Such are a few of the prominent features in the late successes of our Society. I conclude with her future prospects.

“The analogy of all that is past, would encourage us, in reliance upon the nature of our cause, and the goodness of its almighty Author, to be most sanguine for the future. The dawn has been exceedingly fair; and has seemed, from year to year, to advance with uninterrupted lustre towards the mid-day. But on a sudden a meteor seems to have shot athwart the sky, and a cloud to have arisen in the political horizon, which portends the revival of all that is hostile to peace, to liberty, to morals, and to religion. Every hope of temporal blessing has



been checked, and given way to doubt and fear, on the return of the tyrant to the former seat of his power. But, my lord, it is not so with *our* hope. Our Society sprang up in the midst of war, distress, and alarm. It has flourished in spite of every event so prejudicial to all other designs for the good of society. War has paved the way for the Bible, by making the nations sensible of the utter insufficiency and vanity of all other possessions; and by thus convincing them of their want of consolation and instruction from heaven.

"War has also contributed, in an extraordinary manner, to the dissemination of the Bible, by remarkably extending the commercial intercourse and influence of that nation, to whom this office seems to have been first and chiefly committed. War has cradled the infancy, and cherished the adolescence of our Society; and cannot, therefore, be reasonably expected to impede its growth towards manhood and maturity. Surely, then, my lord and gentlemen, we may be permitted still to indulge our hopes, and to labor in our cause; not only of constraint, but willingly and cheerfully: trusting that He, in whose hands are all events, whatever issue he may destine to the approaching contest, will cause his Word to go on conquering and to conquer; and praying, that our enemies, even those who seem now to be severely chastised for their persevering disregard of Divine revelation, may at length, in due time, receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save their souls; and be added to the number of those nations, who, when the judgments of God are

abroad in the word, learn righteousness, and accept salvation."

Edward Stackhouse, Esq. one of the Vice Presidents of the Cornwall Auxiliary Society, having, in a few expressive words, seconded the motion of the Dean of Wells, the Report was unanimously adopted.

The Rev. Mr. Kierulf, minister of the Danish church in London, being now introduced, addressed the meeting to the following effect:

"*My Lord and Gentlemen.*—With a view to second the resolution of the able speaker, who just sat down, I cannot avoid saying a few words with regard to the sentiments so generally entertained in that country where I was born, of the utility and extensive benefit of the British and Foreign Bible Society. A native of Denmark, I myself can judge, my lord, of the zeal shown in that country in forwarding the pious views of this excellent institution. True to the maxims contained in the words of that most worthy and beloved sovereign, who said, "I wish that every poor child in my kingdom may be taught to read the Bible;" true to this maxim of the royal father of the British nation, has the paternal government of Denmark acted during many years. The greatest exertions have been made in promoting the instruction of all ranks of people; even under more recent and national calamities, this object was never lost sight of. I can take upon myself to say, my lord, and I state it with great satisfaction, that your lordship will hardly find a man or a woman who is not able to read the gospel of light—who is not qualified to draw the water of life from its pure source.

"But one institution was still wanting, I need not say which! But with grateful sentiments I have to acknowledge, that by the assistance, and in imitation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, a Bible Society is also established at Copenhagen; to which Society, though in its infancy, all the pious inhabitants of Denmark look up with joyful expectation. This tree will soon spread its branches over the whole country; all smaller towns, nay all villages, will hasten to follow and imitate the example set them by the metropolis, in establishing Auxiliary Societies. Your great object, my lord, will be rapidly promoted; each father of a family, nay, each adult son, and daughter of the family, will have their copy of the Holy Scriptures, for the reading and understanding of which the way is amply prepared.—Denmark owes to her enlightened government, that even the poor are prepared for receiving the word of God: but that a provision has been made for richly supplying the poor with that book, which contains the revelation of God; for this blessing, Denmark will for ever be indebted to the British and Foreign Bible Society."

His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent in rising to move the Thanks to the President, stated, that, while he thought himself called on to listen rather to those Clergymen who had uttered such pious sentiments as he had just heard from the Rev. Dean, he did not think it derogatory to one who had the honor to be a soldier, to say, that the knowledge and use of the Bible is the best support of a soldier in the field—the soldier who mounts the breach, with the almost certainty of meeting death,

or those wounds which may lead to death, will do his duty with courage, when he feels that he is obeying that book which commands the steady and faithful discharge of every duty, and which opens to the Christian immortality beyond the grave."

Sir Thomas Dyke Ackland, Bart. in a very feeling and delicate manner, seconded the Royal Duke's motion. In doing this Sir Thomas Ackland said:

That he thought it a great honor to be allowed to concur in the noble and gratifying sentiments which the assembly had just heard from a high and illustrious quarter by seconding the motion which His Royal Highness had been pleased to propose; and though unexpectedly called upon to take upon himself such a task, he undertook it with somewhat less reluctance, because he was persuaded, that whatever he could possibly advance to excite the gratitude of the meeting to the noble President, would be met by the consenting feelings of all who heard him. He was convinced that however inadequate his attempts might be, what was wanting in his efforts would be supplied by the esteem and affection in which Lord Teignmouth was held; and his lordship's claims to their regard, would be met with that justice in *their* hearts, which *he* (Sir T. A.) should vainly endeavor to render them in words. But in deference to the delicacy of his lordship's feelings, he would abstain from that language of personal praise and admiration, which, however, unfit to be offered in his lordship's presence, must necessarily be used, to describe with truth his zeal and services in the cause of the Institution; and Sir T. A.

was convinced, that the whole meeting would willingly concur, in paying respect to these feelings, while they would be the more anxious to testify their full sense of what was due to his lordship and to themselves, by giving the most open, hearty, and decided sanction to the proposed Vote of Thanks.

That vote, it was to be recollected, was a grateful acknowledgment of his Lordship's uniform and valuable exertions in promoting the object of a great body of Christians, united for one common purpose, most grateful to their own feelings, as a work of piety and the highest charity—most beneficial to others, as an extension of one of the best gifts of God to their fellow citizens through the whole land, and their fellow creatures over all the earth; and, he trusted, well pleasing and acceptable to the common Father, both of those assembled that day in our cause, however differing in many opinions—and of those, for whose benefit their labors were directed, of whatever clime, or country, of whatever cast or colour, of every sort, and every faith, even to the poor heathen, called to light and life by the blessed exertions of the Society.

They were engaged in objects for which his Lordship had received their thanks at ten successive Anniversaries. And the honest acclamations which answered the call of His Royal Highness to repeat those acknowledgments, proved that the sentiments of the Society were not only unchanged, but were confirmed by every additional experience of his Lordship's conduct in the high situation which he held among them. On these grounds, Sir T. A. most

heartily seconded the motion. And if he did not embrace the opportunity of enlarging on the great themes suggested by the usefulness and excellency of the Society, it was because there were never wanting many far better qualified to call forth, by their eloquence and energy, the enthusiasm that warmed the breast of every individual; and also, because he conceived that one who offered, as he unfeignedly did, the tribute of esteem and regard for the character of his Lordship, must be supposed to feel no slight attachment to the excellent principles which had hitherto actuated the Society; and which were, as they ought to be, so eminently conspicuous in its President.

Robert H. Inglis, Esq. in moving Thanks to the Vice Presidents paid an eloquent and feeling tribute to the memory of the late Treasurer of the Society, Henry Thornton, Esq. He urged the extension of Bible Associations, by a variety of considerations; and particularly observed, that if but one person in thirty could be induced to contribute his weekly penny, a sum of 100,000*l.* would be secured annually to the Society.

The Rev. Dr. Collyer in seconding the motion, observed, that no Society ever required high patronage less; and no Society had ever received more. He repelled, in a strain of delicate irony, the insinuations of the Society containing in it any thing which could be construed into a conspiracy, by adverting to the Royal and Episcopal patronage with which it is honored; the union of political parties, which its interior exhibited; and the truly respectable characters of which



its principal friends were composed; among whom he particularized (in William Wilberforce Esq.) the liberator of Africa, and (in Lord Gambier) the pacificator of America. Dr. Collyer expressed his satisfaction at seeing the pastors of the establishment watching over the proceedings of the Society, in the persons of the venerable Bishops then present; and concluded a speech which gave general satisfaction, by a happy allusion to the Apostle's vision of the New Jerusalem, which was to be built of stones of divers colours; adding that if no earthly reward should be given to those who were preparing the way for the accomplishment of this prediction, they would have one in the testimony of their conscience and the peace of God.

The Bishop of Norwich, in proposing Thanks to the Royal Dukes for their continued patronage, paid a warm tribute of respect to His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, in particular, for his support of many charitable Institutions, and especially of the Bible Society. His Lordship observed, that, if we did not but too well know that prejudice has neither eye nor ear, it would be difficult to conceive how this Institution could find an enemy in this Christian country. Yet we had found an enemy; who by aid of distorted facts, ill supported by inconclusive reasoning, had succeeded in raising suspicion, in some quarters against the Society. His Lordship, was happy to say, that a reverend friend near him had, within these few days, published an answer,\* which, if it did not

make a convert of every man in the kingdom, would, he trusted, at least secure the Institution from the repetition of such an attack.

Captain Hawtry, in seconding the Bishop, gratefully acknowledged his obligations to His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, when serving under him at Gibraltar; and feelingly expressed his delight in now beholding him (after an interval of fourteen years) not only the protector of the widow and the orphan, but the patron of the outcasts of Israel, and the friend of the bible. When in the army himself he found a Saviour by the means of the bible alone; and he could not, therefore, but consider himself honored in being permitted to offer his hearty congratulations on the success of that institution, which had for its object to extend the same blessing to the ignorant and wretched in every part of the world.

The Hon. and Rev. Gerard Noel begged leave to mention, that when objections had arisen in Nova Scotia to the Bible Society, and it was said that the mind of the Royal Family was decidedly against it, the Duke of Kent had, without hesitation, written to express his own attachment to the institution; and the Bible Society at Halifax feels, to this hour, the benefits of that interference.

The Duke of Kent acknowledging the vote of thanks for his illustrious relatives and himself, expressed his satisfaction at being honored with the good opinion of his venerable friend the Bishop of Norwich; and could not dissemble

Foreign Bible Society, dedicated (by permission) to the Right Rev. the the Lord Bishop of St. David's, by the Rev. W. Dealtry, &c."

\* Alluding to "A Review of Mr. Norris' Attack upon the British and

the pleasure he had received from the testimony born to his conduct by a gentlemen of whom he had no recollection, whom he could only have seen in the accidental circumstances of service, and whose commendation of him, as a soldier, was free from the suspicion of interested motives; as proceeding from one who had now retired from the hopes and objects of a soldier's career. His Royal Highness, after assigning the motives which induced him to write to Halifax, as abovementioned, concluded, by expressing his desire to see the well known wish of his Royal Father realised; and, apologizing for the necessity he was under of attending another charitable institution, retired from the Meeting amidst general applause.

Robert Grant, Esq. in moving the Thanks of the Committee, traced, in a very forcible manner, the importance which the objects of the Society derived from a comparison with the fleeting and transitory scenes of this world; paid an eloquent tribute to the memory of the departed friends of the Society—Professor Jowett—the Rev. Thomas Charles—Rev. Dr. Buchanan—the Rev. Dr. Brunmark—the Rev. David Brown—the Rev. Henry Martyn. “It may, indeed, be said (added Mr. Grant) of these, that ‘they have fallen each in his field of glory.’ The progress of the Bible Society, through these wild and remote lands, is marked like the progress of a victorious army, by the graves of the heroes who have fallen in the way. The death of these men has endeared the spots where they died, and given us a melancholy relationship with lands separated from our own by many a sea, and many a tract of desert

and of mountain; but the great cause has lost nothing from these events; it is of a superior nature, it must survive; it must go on “conquering and to conquer.”

The Rev. Dr. Thorpe, Secretary to the Hibernian Bible Society, and appearing as its representative, seconded this motion in a very excellent and satisfactory address.

Dr. Thorpe commenced by expressing the pleasure he felt at the manner in which intelligence concerning Ireland had always been received by the British and Foreign Bible Society. This, however, (said Dr. Thorpe) is only as it should be, considering the intimate connection between the two countries; and especially considering, that the Hibernian Bible Society derived its existence from the example, and its support, during its infancy, from the encouragement and aid of that institution, as its parent and protectress. Dr. T. was happy to be able to state, that the Bible Society in Ireland continued to make progress. Branches had been established in every county, except one; and even in that a depository had been opened for the sale of Bibles, and measures taken to establish an auxiliary. The Bible was now on sale in more than one hundred towns. During the last two years, upwards of 80,000 Bibles and Testaments had been issued from the Depository in Dublin: making a Total, since the formation of the society, of nearly 200,000 copies. Dr. T. mentioned various cases, demonstrative of the anxiety of the people, both Protestants and Roman Catholics, to receive the Scriptures, and of the excellent effects which had resulted from their dis-

person; and concluded a very interesting speech, by announcing the determination of the Hibernian Bible Society to contribute in future some portion of their income to the funds of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in consequence of the earnest desire expressed by its members in various places, to have a share in the glorious work of disseminating the Sacred Scriptures all over the world.

Mr. Wilberforce, in moving thanks to the treasurer, John Thornton, Esq. bore a most affecting testimony to his lamented predecessor; and congratulated the Society that another individual of that respected name had come forward to supply his place, and that individual a grandson of John Thornton. Their long friendship revived recollections which almost overwhelmed him. After expatiating, with his usual felicity of expression, on the excellence and progress of the Society, Mr. W. closed a most interesting and impressive speech in nearly the following terms:

"I congratulate the society on the report. It is one of the most extraordinary records that has ever been given. It has told of things, that but for it would have been beyond all belief; it promises events, which, but for the efforts of this society, would be beyond all expectation. I congratulate myself, my lord, in having been permitted to meet this assembly once more. Never did a traveller pass through a desert with the expectation of finding a refreshing stream to slake his thirst, with more delight than I came this day to witness the scene before me. It is a day of happiness and refreshment to the hu-

man heart. For myself, I have no words to express my feelings of reverence and delight; my deep prostration of soul at the Providence that has been displayed, and at the mighty scene that is opening before us. Here we behold people of all nations and complexions praying for our success, and a multitude, whom no man can number, crowding to the altar of our God, to have the impurities of their nature cleansed, their hearts made whole, and their garments washed in the blood of the Lamb. It astonishes. It leaves my spirit no voice but that of praise; its suddenness; its immensity, are all characteristic of its infinite Author; it has all the impression of heaven, all its use, and all its grandeur."

The Right Hon. Lord Headley, V. P. having seconded Mr. Wilberforce,

Mr. John Thornton, in acknowledging the thanks of the meeting, expressed himself persuaded that the Society would rejoice to hear that the word of God, which in the minor, as well as the greater concerns of life, had been his uncle's guide, was his support in the hour of death, and is now the consolation of his widow and family. Having pointed out the encouraging state of the Society's funds, and at the same time the wide sphere which opened for their employment, Mr. T. proceeded to detail certain particulars in the successes of the Society, as entitled to peculiar attention. He adverted more especially to its prosperity in Russia, as in a high degree interesting to himself; it having been his happiness to introduce the subject of the Bible Society to the notice of the late Archbishop of



Moscow, the celebrated Plato. Mr. Thornton then entered circumstantially into the services of the Secretaries, pointing out the various pressure and incessant furtherance of their labors ; and concluded with moving the thanks to those gentlemen.

This Motion was seconded by the Rev. Peter Roe, Minister of St. Mary's Kilkenny, who added much to the information from Ireland, as furnished by Dr. Thorpe ; asserted that a great moral improvement had taken place in that country ; and cited various instances, of a very striking nature, in support of his assertion, Mr. Roe's Speech was delivered with great energy, and produced a considerable impression.

The Rev. C. F. A. Steinkopff expressed his gratitude to the Society for the kind notice taken of his labors ; but more especially his unfeigned thankfulness to Him, who had deemed him worthy to be employed in so noble a work. He wished those who had received benefit from the exertions of this Society, could come forth and testify their thankfulness for them also. He felt the most ardent wish for the prosperity of this Institution ; and that, like the sun in the firmament, it might go on gathering strength, day by day, till it shone forth in all its glories. He felt the most ardent affection for those millions of his fellow creatures who are perishing for lack of knowledge, and desired to communicate to them that Book which is able to make them wise unto salvation. " The Bible Society has yet (continued Mr. S.) a great work to do ; and that work it shall accomplish. Under the auspices of your Lordship, it shall have still greater success.

Your name is dear to all who love the Bible Society. May God give you strength to forward its interests ! Long may you live to preside over this Institution, and see it flourish according to the warmest wishes of your heart."

The Rev. Joseph Hughes observed, that it gave him satisfaction to be considered as having promoted, in any measure, the object of the Society, either by his counsels or his exertions. If those services were acceptable to God, he desired to give him the glory of them. Mr. H. regarded the yoke of the Society more than easy : he counted it one of his brightest ornaments ; and trusted he should find it one of his richest consolations in his dying hour. Thanking the Meeting for the honor they had conferred on him, he concluded, by expressing his hope, that what he had been in times that were past, he should be still more abundantly in times to come.

The Rev. John Owen said, as it was the determination of the Secretaries to leave the foreground at the anniversaries to be occupied by others whom it might be more important to hear, he should take up a few moments in expressing his concurrence in the sentiments of his Colleagues, both as it regarded their gratitude for the thanks which had been voted, and their pledge of renewed exertion in the cause of the Society. For his own part, he had not sought the station in which, for eleven years past, he had the honor to labor ; he had considered the circumstances in which he was placed as constituting a call of duty ; and his only merit, in a human sense, was, if any merit he had in accepting or maintaining an official connection with the Society, that he had not been disobedient to the heavenly vision. He hoped to persevere on the same principles on which he had hitherto acted. He be-

lieved he was doing right, he trusted he was doing good; and after a tribute of respect to the Prelates then present, and particularly to the Bishop of St. David's, who had shown him such marked attention when visiting the Societies in South Wales in the course of the last summer, Mr. O. concluded his address by desiring for himself no other fame, and no other reward, than that which would result from the salutations of his Saviour and his Judge—"Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Baron Anker, from Norway, being introduced through George Wolff, Esq. addressed the meeting as follows:

"It appears to me quite impossible, though I have but a general knowledge of the nature and proceedings of this noble Society, not to feel the most profound respect for its virtuous intentions, benevolent views, and indefatigable exertions.

"A worthy member of this Institution, my friend Mr. Geo. Wolff, to whose application I am indebted for the honor of being present at this meeting, has been good enough to present me with a copy of your Committee's last Report.

"It is astonishing to observe the immense extent of your operations. There is not a quarter of the globe where you have not established Agents and Correspondents, and where your good intentions have not met with more or less success.

"There is not on record, or in existence any association so powerfully supported, or more deserving the support it receives.

"I see, however, that but little has been done for Norway. Only forty six copies of the Bible, and sixty six Testaments, have been sent thither. I do not discover how, and where they have been distributed; nor have I heard any thing upon the subject.

"I have observed this with pleasure, and beg not to be misunderstood, when I make use of this trivial expression.

"I am a native of that country; I reside there; and I hope soon to return to spend the remainder of my days within its protecting rocks.

"If then I said, that I observed with pleasure, that but little had been done for Norway, it was, because it furnishes me with an opportunity of offering my services. May I be an instrument of promoting in that country the laudable views of this Society; I will not say, that I should feel proud; for pride, in my opinion, has nothing in common with religious objects; but I say simply and sincerely, that I should feel happy.

"When infirmities and decay become our lot: at my age I must soon expect my turn: I shall candidly avow my incapability of continuing the task, which the Society might think proper to trust to my care, I shall then give up the concerns to abler hands.

"I must further observe, that Norway is poor though not by her own fault. Recollect, Gentlemen! that the Norwegians are your old brethren; and I do not hesitate to assert, without offence to any, that, comparatively speaking, there does not exist a country, where, in proportion to its population, so great a number of individuals will be found so decidedly attached to Great Britain. They are so still, notwithstanding recent occurrences.

"I have only to add, that I hope the respectable friend, whose name I have mentioned, will become a pledge for the sincerity of my offer."

The Bishop of Norwich prefaced a motion of Thanks to the Presbyteries in Scotland, &c. in the following terms.

"It would be unjust to pass over in silence the attachment to the British and Foreign Bible Society, which has been and now is uniformly displayed in every corner of that enlightened country; and particularly at Glasgow: an attachment which affords a striking illustration of the beneficial effects arising from that pious and affectionate union of Christians, of all denominations, which (next to the general dissemination of the Scriptures) it is our great object to promote and cherish. The time will shortly come, when,

*"Our human passions now no more.*

*"Save Charity, which lives beyond the grave."*

every man who has at heart the present or future happiness of his fellow creatures, will regret, that he has suffered groundless apprehensions, uninformed prejudice or a mistaken zeal for any particular establishment, to hinder him from adding his name to the numerous and daily encreasing list of the friends to so truly Christian an Institution."

The Rev. Hugh Pearson seconded the motion.

The Rev. William Dealtry, in moving Thanks to the Auxiliaries, noticed the increase of £ 8000 in the contributions of those Societies, during the past year, and also the reduction in the number of Bibles and Testaments drawn in return from the Depository of the Parent Institution, as showing that a larger portion of their funds was left disposable for foreign purposes.

The Right Hon. Lord Gambier seconded the motion in the following terms :

"I cannot describe the joy which I feel at seconding the motion. The rise, progress, and increase of this Society, fill me with delight ; and surely there can be no subject so calculated to draw into action every feeling, and every affection of the soul. In our experience shall be verified the truth of God's word : "He that watereth, shall be watered also himself."

Thanks to the President being moved by Baron Anker, were seconded by the Rev. John Owen, as the representative of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, a letter from whom he held in his hand, stating, that notwithstanding the previous arrangement which he had made for that purpose, business had unavoidably prevented his attendance at the present meeting.

Thus ended the Eleventh Anniversary Meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society : a meeting inferior to none that preceded it in general interest. When the Report which was necessarily presented in an abridged form, shall appear at

full length, that interest will doubtless be greatly augmented, from the immense scope of the Society's operations in every quarter of the globe during the past year ; increasingly manifesting the necessity and importance of such an Institution, whose sole object is to benefit mankind, by diffusing throughout the habitable globe those sacred Scriptures " which were given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for correction, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work."

The sentiments delivered by the President after reading the report, and of which the following is a literal record, have been purposely reserved for the conclusion of the present account.

"Gentlemen,

"At the close of each successive year since the establishment of the British and Foreign Bible Society, we have been enabled to review the progress which it has made during the course of it, not only with complacency, but with delight ; and I have now the satisfaction on its eleventh anniversary, to congratulate the members of the Institution, on its increased and increasing prosperity.

"Exclusively devoted to one definite object, disclaiming and studiously avoiding all interference with the political concerns and religious establishment of all states, the Bible Society has held out an invitation to Christians of all countries and denominations, to unite under the banners of the Cross, and in opposition to idolatry and infidelity, to proclaim to all the world, that Name by which alone salvation is to be obtained.

"When we contemplate the alacrity and cordiality with which the invitation has been accepted, the attention which it has awakened to the Holy Scriptures, and the charity which it has diffused ; when we consider the extensive connections of the Society, the magnitude of its operations, the munificence by which it is supported, and especially when we trace the detail of



its progress towards its present aggrandizement, we must feel and acknowledge with gratitude and adoration, "it is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

"Notwithstanding, however, the extent in which the Scriptures have been circulated, we still hear of Christian countries, where the Bible is scarcely procurable; of Christian communities, many of the members of which never saw a Bible; and many to whom the very name of a Bible is unknown; and of the two thousand churches in Georgia, Imeretta, and Mingrelia, it is asserted, that two hundred Bibles are not to be found in them all. These are lamentable wants, but we have the satisfaction to know, that the spirit of inquiry excited by the Society has led to the discovery of them; and *that* to a disposition and active exertions to supply them.

"In the prosperity of the Society, which we devoutly ascribe to the Divine favor, we recognize an animating motive to perseverance in the line of duty to which we have devoted ourselves. From the elevation which the Bible Society has attained, the horizon of its prospects becomes indeed immeasurably widened, presenting within its continually enlarging circumference, an immense field for future exertions. But the prospect is as cheering as it is extensive: wherever the Society moves, it gives and receives blessings; and I doubt not that the prayers of thousands are this day offered up for the Divine benediction on the proceedings of this meeting.

"When I consider what the Bible Society has effected, I feel a delight which no language can express, in the reflection, that this country, which by the favor of a gracious Providence has so long "drawn water from the wells of salvation," has given birth to an Institution which has united the affections and concentrated the efforts of Christians, for conveying the streams of the fountain of life, to all the corners of the world. The reflection has this additional gratification, that it suggests an undoubting confidence that the piety and charity which

have supported the Institution will never fail to supply the necessary means for the continuance of its beneficial labors.

"The work in which we are engaged may be truly denominated a "labor of love," the benefits of which are not only felt by the present, but will extend to future generations; beyond even the limits of time into eternity. And when we of the present race are passed away, we may trust that the Lord of the vineyard will raise up new laborers to carry it on. It is a work on which we may hope for the blessing of God: it is holy in its object, pure in its means, and charitable in its end, for it has the glory of God for its object, the Bible for its means, and for its end, the temporal and eternal welfare of mankind."

MESSRS. NOTT AND HALL'S JOURNAL.

*(Continued from page 318.)*

"We several times visited the Jews at Muttoncherry, near Cochin, went into their synagogues, and conversed with their priest and most intelligent men.

"The White Jews have but one Synagogue in this part of the country. The Black Jews have eight. Of the White Jews there are forty-two families, and eighty males above thirteen years of age, at which time according to their custom they are no longer minors. The whole number of Black Jews in this part of the country amounts, according to their own estimate, to five or six hundred. Some intelligent European gentlemen thought that their number was much greater, but they gave no reasons for differing from the estimate of the Jews themselves. The most interesting things about these Jews are the time and manner of their arriving in this country. We saw the copper plates mentioned by Dr. Buchanan. There can be no doubt but that the Jews were here as early as 490 of the Christian era. But beyond this all is darkness and uncertainty. They differ widely among themselves,

and seem to possess no authentic accounts of the time and manner of their coming to India. It does not appear that many of the White Jews understand Hebrew, though they all read printed Hebrew in their synagogues. We were told that none of the black Jews understood Hebrew, and that none of them are intelligent and well informed men. The White Jews all agree in saying that the Black Jews are not of Jewish descent. They say that when the Jews first came to this country they bought Hindoo slaves, and that they circumcised them and educated them in the Jewish religion. Eventually these Black Jews became numerous, and the White Jews judging it expedient for several reasons, began to release the former, and to allow them to build separate synagogues, but they were not considered as qualified to perform the synagogue worship without the superintendence of a White Jew, which, as we were informed, is the case to this day.

"The White Jews still hold slaves whom they pointed out to us, and they certainly had the very likeness of the Black Jews. They allow the Black Jews no terms of equality, and will not allow them to sit in the synagogue, except on the floor. On the other hand the Black Jews claim to themselves the most remote residence in the country, but we saw no evidence to support such a claim. They certainly seem to have the exact countenance of the natives, and could not be distinguished from them, only as all other religions sects in India are distinguished, by their dress, some mark on their face, or by something in the cut of the hair or beard; all of which are under the direction of their religion. So far from this are the White Jews, that by their features and complexion, they are known as readily as the Englishman. Indeed by common consent a great part of the White Jews, (some say three fourths) have emigrated from European states within two or three centuries past.

(To be continued.)

## OBITUARY.

**DIED**, in Hartford, the 18th of August last, the Hon. CHAUNCEY GOODRICH, Lieutenant Governor of this State. The following character of him is given by the Rev. Mr. STRONG in his Funeral Sermon:—

"Lieutenant Governor GOODRICH was the eldest child of the Rev. Elizur Goodrich, D. D. late of Durham. He was born from a line of respectable ancestors, October 20, 1759. He was educated at Yale College, where he rendered himself peculiarly dear to his instructors and fellow students. That distinction in genius and science, which he ever after supported, appeared in the early part of his academic life. Having spent several years as an instructor, in the place of his education, he fixed his residence in this city, where he soon became eminent as a counsellor at law, and advocate in the courts of justice. His manners, his knowledge, his integrity and benevolence endeared him to the people.

"In 1793 he was chosen a Representative of this town, in the legislature of the State. He was a Representative from Connecticut, in the Congress of the United States, from the year 1794 to 1800.

"In 1802 he was chosen an Assistant Counsellor of the State, and retained the office until appointed a Senator of the United States, 1807.

"While engaged in these high offices, at the earnest solicitation of his fellow citizens, he accepted the Mayoralty of the city of Hartford, in 1812.

"He was appointed Lieutenant Governor of this State, in 1813, when he resigned his seat in the Senate of the United States. The two last offices to which he was elected, he sustained at the time of his death.

"This long catalogue of public offices is not recited to blazon the fame of a mortal man; but as the highest evidence of the confidence reposed in him by the people, of his diligence and capacity in basi-

ness, and his unwearied endeavour to do good to mankind.

"Twice he was respectably connected in the most endearing relation of life; and as often, the tender ties were early broken.

"Lieutenant Governor Goodrich possessed a clear understanding, richly fraught with science, a sound judgment, and a benevolent heart — He was an able jurist, a politician of enlarged views, an upright judge, and a wise legislator.

"From his early youth he was a believer of the Christian Religion. Reasons of a peculiar nature, which it is not necessary I should explain particularly, prevented a public profession of his faith. These objections were recently removed, and he died while an applicant for Christian privileges in this church, which has been prevented a number of months by indisposition of body. As the testimony of such a man in favour of Christian piety, ought never to be secreted, I must be indulged in mentioning what he said to me, in a late conversation concerning his own spiritual state. Speaking of a moral life, as it is distinguished from the grace of God

in the heart, he said, "*A moral life of itself is nothing for the salvation of the soul. I have lived a moral life in the estimation of the world; but I am a bundle of iniquity in the sight of a holy God. If there were not an atonement, I must be condemned and miserable for ever. Here my hope is stayed. Sometimes a sense of my own imperfection sinks my spirits; generally I have a hope that supports me; at times I have rejoiced in God without fear, and wished only to be in his hands and serve him*" Into the blessed presence of this God, we humbly believe our departed friend has now entered."

In Middleborough, (Mass.) Rev. JOSEPH BARKER, aged 64; formerly a Representative to Congress.

At Wilmington, (Del.) on the 6th of July, the Hon. JAMES A. BAYARD, one of the late American Plenipotentiaries at Ghent.

At Guilford, Rev. ELIPHALET LESTER, aged 87.

At his seat near Georgetown, the Hon. PHILIP BARTON KEY, aged 58, formerly a Member of Congress from Maryland.

#### *Donations to the Missionary Society of Connecticut.*

1815.

Aug. 29.	From a Friend of Missions,	- - - - -	\$ 1 00
31.	From Rev. William Hanford, collected in new settlements,	- - - - -	12 93
			<hr/> \$ 13 93